



# Occupational Pneumoconiosis Board

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*2005 - 2006*

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Annual Report

# **Occupational Pneumoconiosis Board**

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## **Members**

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**James H. Walker, M.D.**

Thoracic Cardiovascular Medicine  
Chairman

**Jack L. Kinder, M.D.**

Internal Medicine

**Thomas M. Hayes, M.D.**

Radiologist – B Reader

**Bradley D. Henry, M.D.**

Internal Medicine

**Johnsey Lee Leef, Jr., M.D.**

Radiologist – B Reader

# Occupational Pneumoconiosis Board

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## Overview

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The Occupational Pneumoconiosis Board schedules examinations for all workers filing occupational pneumoconiosis claims. The Board makes impairment determinations based on available claim related medical evidence.

The Board obtains a complete medical history of the worker, including any treatment for heart and lung disorders and other conditions that restrict the workers' activity. The medical history includes current and past tobacco use and to what extent and by what method tobacco is or was used. Clinical members of the Board conduct a physical examination of the worker, giving special attention to heart and lungs, as well as any disabling injuries. Under close supervision, workers able to exercise safely perform a simple, standardized exercise test.

Chest X-rays are made under the supervision of the radiologist members of the Board, following film quality and technical standards established by the ***Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969*** to detect even minute changes possibly due to pneumoconiosis.

Board members are thoroughly familiar with identifiable diagnostic changes shown by X-rays of the worker for evidence of changes occurring over time.

The Occupational Lung Center at Charleston Area Medical Center performs pulmonary diagnostic testing for the Board and reports on loss of lung function and the extent to which lost lung function impairs the worker's ability to work.

## The 2005/2006 Occupational Pneumoconiosis Board Annual Report

<b>Activity</b>	<b>July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005</b>	<b>July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006</b>
Total Number of Workers Examined	1435	753
First Time Workers	722	299
First Time Workers Receiving No Diagnosis	519	201
First Time Workers Receiving Initial Award	203	98
Total Number of Cancells / No Shows	349	145
First Time Workers Receiving OP/O (no award)	54	19
Repeat Workers Receiving OP/O (first time-no award)	49	32
Total Workers Receiving OP/O	103	51
Workers Receiving Repeat Examination	713	454
Repeat Exam of Workers Receiving No Additional Award	611	385
Repeat Exam of Workers Receiving Additional Award	102	69
Total Number of Fatal Claims Reviewed	195	124
Fatal Claims Due to Occupational Pneumoconiosis	16	12
Fatal Claims Not Due to Occupational Pneumoconiosis	179	112
Out of Town Reviews Examined	13	9
Out of Town Reviews Receiving No Diagnosis	10	5
Out of Town Reviews Receiving an Award	3	4

Physicians at the Occupational Lung Center in Charleston, West Virginia examined 753 occupational pneumoconiosis claimants during the reporting period. An additional 124 fatal claims and 9 off-site or remote claims were reviewed.

During the fiscal year of this report, the Board saw several changes resulting from decreases in case reviews and the number of diseased workers seeking benefits. Fewer Board meetings were needed to manage the caseload.

There continues to be a minimal backlog of claims with normal delay from application to evaluation.

Jack L. Kinder, M.D.  
Chairman (appointed December 6, 2006)